Letters to the Editor

'Moral Victory'

As an interested outsider in the recent provincial government versus employees' association dispute, it would appear to me that the government has succeeded for the second time in as many weeks in placing the associates in a rather embarrassing position. I refer specifically to the issuance of pay cheques for the month of March which were in full, i.e., no deduction was made for the several hours that association members were on "strike."

To "strike" means to withdraw one's labor without hope of remuneration for the length of the strike. In short the striker must be willing to sacrifice both time and wages (or salary) to achieve an end.

It would appear therefore that any striking member of the association who accepted and retained remuneration for the period of time he withdraw his labor was not truly on strike and is destroying the morality of the so-called "moral victory" that the association claimed.

Surely the executive of the association can and should take action in this matter by requesting that its members return to the government the unearned portion of their March pay cheques together with a written explanation as to their reason for so doing. Then and only then will the striking membership be able to say that they sacrificed time and wages to achieve an end.

Failure to do so belies the strike and the so-called "moral victory" and leaves the association membership in a more embarrassing position than they were previously.

H. C. BANCROFT,
(Ex-Ontario Civil Service).

1532 Crown Crescent, Toronto, Ont.

Sweepstake Benefits

With regard to the Irish Sweepstakes, one of the great benefits to Ireland has been the virtual elimination of tuberculosis in the country by the building and equipping of many modern sanatoriums and clinics, thanks to the money raised thereby.

(Mrs.) E. HOOPER.

953 St. Patrick Street.

Off-Street Parking

The members of the Vancouver Island Ratepayers' Association, Victoria branch, wish to express their appreciation the valuable service rendered to Victoria by our ex-alderman J. D. Smith, MLA, in giving the courts an opportunity to judge the legality of the off-street parking bylaw. A lot has been said for and against this bylaw. Now Mr. Smith and the city council will have to give facts.

We are of the opinion that this off-street parking carried out the way stated by city council will be costly to the property-owners in this city, and we should be thankful for having this bylaw investigated.

H. WATSON, President,
V. I. R. A., (Victoria Branch).

815 North Park Street.

Pre-Dated by 1,700 Years

Euclid Not the First

By TERENCE DAVIDSON
Reuters

Discoveries recently made by archaeologists working in the ancient lands of the eastern Mediterranean include mathematical formulae that pre-date Euclid by 1,700 years, and a dictionary in four languages compiled more than 3,000 years ago.

The formulae were found on slates unearthed by Iraqi archaeologists working at Tel Harmal, near Baghdad, believed to have been a Babylonian administrative centre and the seat of an academy about 2,000 B.C.

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Some slates bore algebraic and geometrical problems solved by means of equations. Others preserved essays on literature, commerce and administration.

The Iraqi department of antiquities has announced that American, West German and Japanese archaeological teams are to investigate different areas of Iraq this year.

The dictionary, which includes a valuable guide to pronounciation, was found in one of two libraries discovered in a quarter of Ugarit evidently inhabited by wealthy and powerful men of the 13th and 14th centuries B.C. This well-to-do neighborhood included two-storey houses with up to 35 rooms, complete with bathrooms and drainage.

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Also found in one of the libraries was correspondence with an Egyptian pharaoh of the time, and with the king of Cyprus and the king of the Hittites.

In an interview with the Lebanese newspaper L'Orient, Schaeffer said: "These discoveries compel us to revise entirely the judgments passed on the Canaanite or Phoenician civilization by the Old Testament; and Ras-Shamra (the modern name of the site) is certainly one of the principal archaeological sites in the world. It is from there that all civilization started."

The first known alphabet was that of Ras-Shamra, Schaeffer said. The people of Ugarit could learn to read and write; seven languages were taught in its schools; travellers came from Egypt, Crete and Cyprus to do business or take part in its intellectual life.

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Another discovery was discussed last week by Dr. Kathleen Kenyon, director of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem and lecturer in Palestinian archaeology at the University of London, who directed excavations at the site of Jericho near Jerusalem from 1952 until their conclusion last year.

Dr. Kenyon said that evidence suggests that Jericho was founded by nomads or cave-dwelling hunters who first came to the oasis for temporary sanctuary, then gradually discovered the benefits of settled agriculture.

Their civilization—the earliest known was established there nearly 10,000 years ago.

J. B. McGEACHY

Canada's Dilemma

By ERIC DOWNTON
North American Newspaper Alliance

Proposals for an international neutral zone in the Arctic, possibly under UN supervision, may eventually present the Canadian government with a dilemma. While Canadian politicians and diplomats are enthusiastic and vocal supporters of schemes to create such zones on other nations' territories, Ottawa is extremely sensitive an anything impinging on Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic.

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Exploratory suggestions for a "neutral Arctic"—and perhaps eventually a similar zone in the Antarctic—are reported to have been raised in informal talks at Geneva and the United Nations headquarters at New York by diplomats of Soviet and Scandinavian governments. Such feelers, with no formal backing as yet, have long-range significance.

More can be expected to be heard of the idea if the Central European zone of "freezing armed forces and gradual disengagement," now under active study in all major capitals, is agreed upon at the projected summit conference this summer.

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The concept is to create a buffer region between the two main rival regions in today's world power politics, the Soviet land mass and North America. The Polar cap, it is suggested, should be placed under international supervision. Canada, Russia, Denmark and the U.S. would be the powers mainly concerned. In the non-Communist world Canada has by far the largest Arctic frontier.

All military installations would be removed.

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Eskimos living within the international region might become wards of the UN.

Prime Minister John Diefenbaker has offered to open the Canadian Arctic to inspection teams as part of an international disarmament scheme. But he also rode to power partly by appealing to Canadian nationalist sentiments.

His electioneering phrase, "The vision," has entered the Canadian political dictionary.

And "the vision" refers to promises of immense development in the Canadian north.

Could Canada Declare Neutrality?

By J. B. McGEACHY
The Financial Post

Should Canada abandon defence spending? Should we consider adopting a policy of neutrality, like India or Austria, in the cold war?

The mere fact that these questions can be asked—and they are indeed being asked by intelligent Canadians—suggests a revolution in our national thinking. It's evident that many of us are deeply disturbed by the perilous situation to which 12 years of cold war have brought us.

U.S. Satellite

To all intents and purposes Canada is now (let us candidly use the accurate if painful word) a military satellite of the U.S. And by consenting, without a murmur, to the use of our soil to facilitate nuclear assault on the Soviet Union, we make Canada a wholly legitimate target for the Russians in the event of trouble.

As one writer recently summed up orthodoxy, we are "inescapably bound to the American chariot" and the best we can do is "try to stay in the front seat." Maybe so; but at least it's legitimate to examine the basis for this assumption. There is nothing to be said for numb, dumb acceptance of the existing situation as permanent.

1939 Example

One might begin by remarking that in the 1930s Canada, just like the U.S., was both neutral and defenceless. Quite as isolationist as the Americans, we had no armed forces to speak of and we refused all commitments abroad.

In September, 1939, when Britain and France declared war on Hitler, we abandoned our "no commitments" slogan and got into the fight. But our neighbors, though they had been the loudest scoffers at "appeasement" in 1938, showed no inclination to join us in this enterprise. In a war that affected us, they were prepared to abstain indefinitely.

Protest Made

Indeed in October, 1939, the 21 American republics, including the U.S., proclaimed their neutrality in a document called the Declaration of Panama, at the same time announcing that there must be no hostilities on the high seas within 300 miles of their shoreline.

So seriously did they take this requirement that they protested jointly at the end of 1939 when British warships chased the German Graf Spee to its demise off Montevideo, Uruguay. To the protest Winston Churchill replied that if the Royal Navy weakened in its job of patrolling the Atlantic, the republics "would soon have many worse worries than the sound of one day's distant cannonade."

No Obligation

The Americans, then, were far from accepting the notion of collective security during either of the wars against Germany. In these combats they were belligerents for just 1,835 days out of 3,633 or 50.6 per cent of the time; they were neutral (though not impartial) for the remaining 49.4 per cent.

I recall these facts only to make the point that Canadians are under no obligation whatever, merely out of neighborly good feeling, to commit themselves to take part in U.S. wars.

'Goodwill'

It may be replied that goodwill has nothing to do with the case; but I would disagree. "Goodwill" may not be precisely the right word; but certainly a desire to keep in step with Washington, to consider American feelings and to avoid a collision with the U.S. in foreign affairs (take for example, the case of China) is a factor in determining Canadian policy.

And I suggest, without fear of contradiction, that this is one reason why we are in our present pickle and that one very serious obstacle to defenceless neutrality for Canada is that it would distress the Americans and cause a marked diminution in their love for us.

Invasion?

They might regard our action as so unfriendly as to justify invasion and forcible occupation of our terrain.

But they might not.

If the Americans simply took over and operated military installations here against our will, obviously there would be a very serious net loss to the western alliance—a loss of repute that would injure us all in the remotest corners of Africa and Asia.

But if, as seems more likely, the Americans responded to the Canadian threat by bringing all possible economic and diplomatic pressure to bear upon us, as they would be fully entitled to do in their national interest, beneficial results might ensue.

May Do Good

The Americans might be shocked into awareness of the Canadian position; and the Canadians might be inspired by their own boldness to engage in some overdue bargaining and debate with the neighbors.

Up to date, in our defence arrangements with them, we have been far too sentimental ("hands across the border" and that sort of thing) and not nearly cold-blooded and hard-boiled enough.

On U.S. Side

What are the Canadian realities of which the Americans should be made conscious if possible? One reality is that we are not, and could not possibly be, morally or philosophically neutral in any scrap between Washington and Moscow. We are definitely on Washington's side.

But this argument is about military commitments in advance of hostilities; and we might reasonably claim the same right to stay out of a fight as the U.S., though never pro-Hitler, claimed and exercised in 1939-41. True, we signed away this right by joining NATO; but treaty obligations can be renegotiated when they lead to a wrong result.

Best Reason

In short, the case for Canadian neutralism, if you put your mind to it, turns out to be quite persuasive — even though it may be academic. And I have not even mentioned the argument that a neutral North American nation might expect to be useful, and perhaps influential, in composing Russo-American differences. This may be the best reason of all for Canada to set itself up as a one-country "third power."

For the present, however, my only suggestion is that the Canadian ambassador to the U.S. should pick the largest American audience he can find and state the case for Canadian neutrality hypothetically. He could then point out that Canada has sacrificed a position of relative safety and probable usefulness for the sake of American security.

Disengagement

He could explain that Canadians are reasonably alarmed by the results of this sacrifice and may have to consider a change of policy—a kind of Canadian disengagement — if the American government does not speedily negotiate some relief of current tensions—in the Arctic, to mention one danger zone only.

I think it can be positively guaranteed that this speech by our ambassador would get attention at Washington.

Harbors Going Dry, Scientists Baffled

ATHENS (Reuters)—Water level in Greek harbors has been dropping recently, but scientists cannot explain the phenomenon.

The drop, which in many places exceeds three feet, first was noted after strong northerly winds and a drop in temperature.

At Nafplion harbor, in southern Greece, small boats "sat" on the sea bottom after the level of the water fell by three feet.

The bottom of the old Venetian harbor at Heraklion, Crete, has appeared in many places.

Similar phenomena have been reported from Rhodes Island, in the southeast, and Lefkas Island, off the western coast.

Some attributed the drop to strong winds or to an undersea earthquake. However, water level remained low even after winds subsided, and no earthquake was recorded by seismographs.

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